

## Working model for dealing with pandemic

**AIDS, Health, and Mental Health: a Primary Sourcebook.** Judith Landau-Stanton and Colleen D. Clements. 327 pp. Illust. Brunner/Mazel Publishers, New York. 1993. \$38.95 (US). ISBN 0-87630-688-1

**T**his book is intended for any health care professional who cares for patients with HIV infection or AIDS. It is comprehensive, neatly integrating the biologic, psychologic, sociocultural, economic, political and spiritual dimensions of the pandemic into a working model for prevention and treatment. The authors and their associate writers are from varied disciplines.

The first half of the book takes a systems approach to the prevention of AIDS. Topics covered are the metaphors and myths about AIDS, the limitations of the biopsychosocial model, a review of the people, families and populations at risk, issues for health care providers (including fear of contagion and burnout), a busy year (January to December 1991) in the life of the pandemic, sources of information and how to keep current.

The remainder of the book is about managing HIV infection and AIDS. Topics discussed are the epidemiology and transmission of HIV infection (with an excellent section on HIV-antibody testing), neuropsychiatric diagnosis and treatment, psychotherapeutic interventions (with superb case examples of strategies for individuals, couples, families and groups), spiritual approaches (including racial and ethnic issues) and ethical dilemmas for the health care professional (personal v.

community rights, economic and political realities, assisted suicide and conflicts between the duty to warn and confidentiality).

This book is easy to read. The case examples make it practical, as do the many headings, uncomplicated tables, summaries and suggestions for management. The reference list is extensive and current. I recommend the book to junior clinicians because of its wide-ranging content and helpfulness in everyday medicine and to experienced clinicians because of its integrated, novel approach to the complex issue of managing HIV infection and AIDS.

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## Not quite relevant to Canada

**Medicine, Law and Social Change: the Impact of Bioethics, Feminism and Rights Movements on Medical Decision-Making.** Leanne Darvall. Medico-Legal Series. 147 pp. Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Brookfield, Vt. 1993. \$56.95 (US). ISBN 1-85521-077-0

**T**he subtitle of this book summarizes the author's purpose: to explain to a general readership how social forces have used legal instruments to redirect medical professionalism, from paternalism to patient self-determination. A lawyer at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia, the author draws on the Australian medicolegal context and its US counterpart to address how

the consumer and women's movements, bioethics, courts and governments have reshaped perceptions of how physicians should regard their patients.

Identifying populist movements and bioethics as forces of change, and the judiciary and government as instruments of change, the author focuses on consent to medical treatment in probing the transition from the physician to the patient as the principal decision-maker in clinical care. Discussed is general consent to medical treatment, refusal of treatment, the regulation of human-subject research and Australian and US developments in the regulation of research. A brief postscript addresses the two countries' legislation on the role of patients as decision-makers.

Readers familiar with the Canadian medicolegal environment will find predictable topics and orientations discussed in a readable but pedestrian style and contrasted with the Australian experience. The analysis can be translated to the Canadian context with relative ease. Those who undertake the exercise may wonder, however, whether gains in understanding justify the effort. For readers less accustomed to the Canadian medicolegal and bioethical literature, which compares the Canadian and US environments, there will be only minor distortions in the equating of the Australian and Canadian contexts. Laws in both countries were conditioned by British law, but Australia has recently followed initiatives of the Supreme Court of Canada in adopting a US influence on informed consent and on banning sterilization of mentally impaired people.

The book offers an overview of the interaction between social and institutional forces that shape med-